

FISHING THE OVER UNDER STYLE

I hung up the phone wondering how I'd convince my golf loving husband to take a fishing vacation...then decided to focus on the easier person – Capt. Ned Hammond. I figured living in Annapolis, MD he'd be ready for a tropical fishing adventure. I was right, didn't take but a minute to hear his WAHOOOOOO coming thru the phone line. We were set. In a few weeks we'd be on our first Bahamas fishing expedition – and doing it custom style with Over Under Adventures.

I was excited too. Although I live in the keys, where we have great fishing, I'd heard many stories of monster fish in the Bahamas. 100 lb wahoo, 50 lb dolphin, good marlin bite, and more...visions of fish were dancing in my head. When I talked to my husband that night, he could see my excitement and agreed to forego his normal Sunday golf – but only for one weekend! Ha, I'd succeeded. And began counting down the days.

We were going to fly from Marathon to Cat Island and stay at Hawk's Nest Resort the first day. Leave early in the morning, and traveling about 300 miles, we'd get there with daylight and half a day of fishing. Upon our arrival it was readily apparent that this was going to be a very special trip. As we departed our twin engine aircraft, bubbling with enthusiasm about our incredible flight across the open ocean and the hundreds of islands that make up the Bahama island chain we were greeted by a friendly young lady who welcomed us to Cat Island. Laid back...well Jen's greeting included, "help yourself to what ever you want from the bar, you'll find a clipboard on the counter...just write down what you have, but by all means, help yourself." I thought to myself...Here we are, over 300 miles from the mainland of the Florida coast, on an island that Christopher Columbus and his group stumbled upon on their adventures back in the early 1600's. How cool!

A short walk, (according to my husband, "about a Tiger Woods sand wedge") whatever that means we came upon the motel, restaurant and bar, again way to cool. Regardless of where you are at the resort you can always look out at those incredible crystal clear turquoise and dark blue waters. With the drop off only a hundred yards or so from the beautiful white sandy beach, the contrast of the sandy bottom and the blue waters of the deep is breathtaking!

After a quick trip to the bar, several high fives the four of us left the pool bar and began our walk to the docks, (only a Tiger wedge away...) where we will head out to sea aboard the Over & Under, a beautiful 54' Bertram sportfish equipped with the finest in tournament tackle.

Captain Pete welcomes us aboard, gives us the run down on what we can expect to catch and off we go!

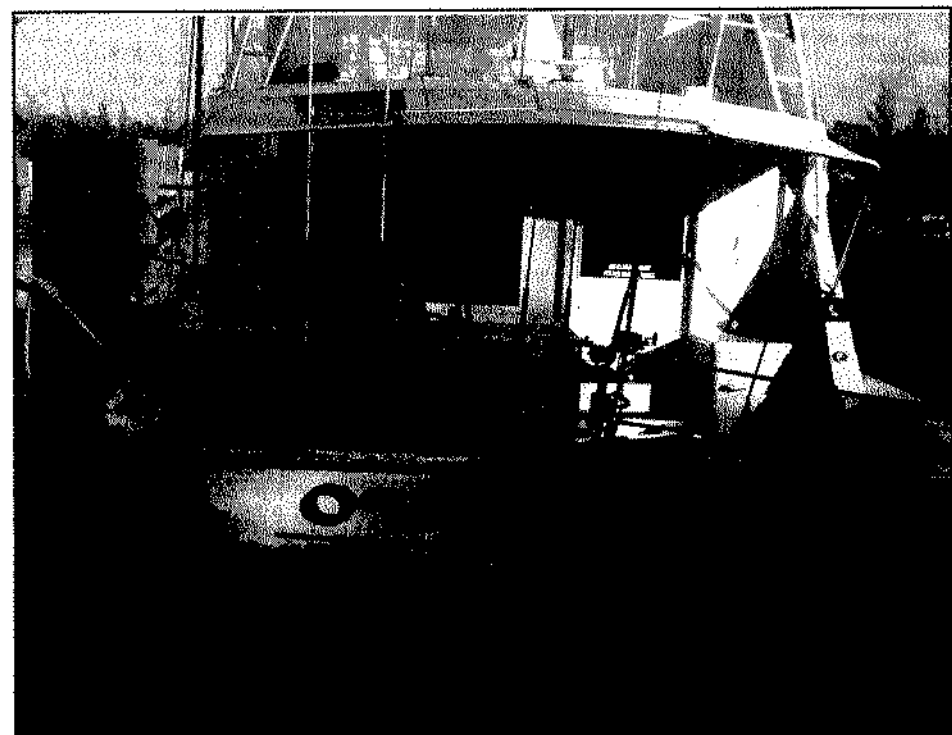
As we leave the protected harbor again I'm awestruck with the beauty of the island and it's waters. Within a couple of minutes Capt. Pete has the big Bertram up on plane and cutting through the 5'seas like a knife through warm butter. We're off to Columbus Point, an underwater peninsula of land sticking off the east side of the island that jets out about a mile from shore. Here the water depths go from over 2000' to less than a 100'. This area provides a great eatery for wahoo and other pelagic species. It seems that bait schools love this upwelling, thus providing anglers a great chance at catching a few of the predators at the top of the chain. Captain Pete and our host, Captain Trey have caught dozens of wahoo here that tip the scales at



well over 80 pounds! Now, obviously we are excited about our opportunity, but Pete & Trey remind us that there is another top predator on the food chain, the big dog if you will, the shark. Huge hammerheads, giant tigers etc... inhabit the "Point" and frequently will eat your big wahoo as you do battle. As we soon found out, perhaps, "frequently" was not a strong enough of an adverb to describe the ferocious behavior of these "Point Sharks". Indeed, within 10 minutes of Capt. Pete pulling the Over & Under back to trolling speed we were hooked up with a big wahoo only to have it eaten off the hook by a big shark. How do I know it was big...two bites and my 60 lb.class wahoo was gone! However, we were warned, and true to what we were told we had to get our fish to the boat AQAP (as quick as possible). So, after our next hookup, the drag handle was moved past strike, and the game was on! 41 pounds of drag on a stand up 50W International, with 80 lb line on a custom stand up rod outfit were our weapons of choice. Results...four additional hook ups...score...wahoo 3 Weekly Fisherman gang 1. Oh, I did catch the largest barracuda I've ever seen, didn't weigh it, but it was well over 35 pounds.

Upon our arrival back at the docks we had the pleasure of meeting a wonderful gentleman by the name of Jerry. "Good fishing Maan", oh yeah and we got a big cuda for you. All smiles, the pleasant Bahamian took our

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OVER & UNDER

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wahoo and his barracuda back to the resort, where we would both enjoy the bounty of the sea later. Subsequently, after enjoying a frosty adult beverage or two, we got our marching orders for the following day. Captain Pete & Captain Trey assured us that tomorrow morning we would take to the sea for a full day of fishing and fun on the ocean.

Dinner was fabulous, the chef did an incredible job with our wahoo. Prepared several different ways and served up family style we enjoyed what was a very memorable dining experience. The dining room has about a dozen tables, and the walls are dotted with fish mounts and tropical artwork, the perfect setting for this 12 room tropical paradise. 12 rooms, incredibly friendly hospitality from all at the resort, hammocks strung between palm trees on the beach, world class sportfishing...does it get any better than this...NOT!

Day two started much like you can imagine. I stroll along the beach in the morning, again awestruck by the beauty of where we are, followed by a wonderful breakfast served by the smiling staff. The staff prepared our box lunches as we sat and had breakfast outside overlooking the pool and ocean. As the four of us dined, I couldn't help but be reminded of what Mel Fisher used to say in Key West...today's the day boys.

Consequently, as we left the harbor on our second day adventure, and I peered out over the bow of the Over & Under I soaked up all that the island had to give me.

Today we would fish the west side of the island; the lee of the land would provide a degree of shelter from the 20 knot winds. Again, minutes after our lines were in, we were hooked up! However, it wasn't one of the big wahoo, so coveted by anglers at this time of year, no it was dolphin, (mahi-mahi). Always a great delight, but this one was no match for our big game tackle. Ned had the twenty pound bull to the boat very quickly. Again, the bounty of the sea would be

enjoyed at the dinner table. After fishing for a couple of hours we decided to take a break and head closer to shore for a little snorkeling/diving and lunch. We pulled up to a beautiful lagoon type setting and dropped anchor for what can only be described as one of the most beautiful places I've ever seen.

Snorkeling and diving was great, lunch was fabulous and an hour or so later we were back trolling for huge wahoo. As luck would have it, we didn't land any of the 100+ pound wahoo that the waters are famous for, but we did get a number of fish that were in the 60 pound range.

Wrapping it up...

Hawk's Nest Resort is a special place. A place that should be enjoyed by all true sportfishermen in the world. The scenery is breathtaking, the resort is unparalleled in it's hospitality, and most importantly, the crew of the Over and Under Sportfishing Adventures is first class, at the top of their profession and a true pleasure to be around. We have already booked a return trip with Over and Under Adventures, and can not wait to get back to Cat Island and the hot blue marlin bite in June!

